

20 ft. below it. Even though two of us had some experience in rock-climbing, the last pitch was too much for us. It was steep and a rushing brook covered all the promising hand-holds. In a dry season, the ascent might have been easier, but it appeared to us that a rope would have been most desirable. We all felt considerable respect for Dr. Churchill's mountaineering ability.

From a vantage point across from a narrow shelf covered with vegetation, it was possible to study the surrounding area with care through the glasses and we felt that it was possible that there were other interesting plants in extremely hazardous or inaccessible sites in the gully. In any case we feel that Dr. Churchill's discovery was the most outstanding bit of botanizing on Mt. Washington in the past 50 years.

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SAXIFRAGA CERNUA IN NEW ENGLAND*

In the United States east of the Rocky Mountains, *Saxifraga cernua* L. has been found only in northern Minnesota.¹ Although it grows in the Gaspé Peninsula of Quebec, this chiefly northwestern and Eurasian arctic plant was hitherto unexpected in the well explored mountains of New England. The unusual circumstance attending the discovery of *Saxifraga cernua* on Mount Washington in Cöos County, New Hampshire, is the subject of this report.

On July 20, 1939, one of the authors (Churchill) explored a deep ravine cut into the flank of Mount Washington and, while exploring a cliff face there, found *Saxifraga Aizoön*.² Near the *Saxifraga Aizoön* colony, Churchill also

¹FERNALD, M. L. 1950. Gray's Manual of Botany, Ed. 8. American Book Co., New York. 1632 P.

²CHURCHILL, J. A. 1967. *Saxifraga Aizoön* in New Hampshire, *Rhodora* 69: 483-484.

*The authors appreciated the help of John Beaman, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Curator of the Beal-Darlington Herbarium in the preparation of this article.

explored a shelf situated high in a vertical rock trough down which a cataract poured. The shelf was covered with greenery, which was wet with spray. On the shelf grew plants, which the writer assumed were *Saxifraga rivularis*, a plant known from the Presidential Range. The story might easily have ended at this point, for the descent from the wet trough proved to be extremely treacherous.

The other author (Hodgdon) wanting to verify the *Saxifraga Aizoön* record, sought the plant on July 29, 1967 in company with F. L. Steele and James Teeri following directions that Churchill had forwarded to Richard Eaton.³ They decided they could not reach the shelf without excessive risk. However, they did scale a buttress at one edge of the trough reaching the level of the shelf. With glasses, Hodgdon could see Saxifrage plants on the shelf, and much to his surprise made out the features of *Saxifraga cernua*.

When this news was related to Churchill at a meeting with Hodgdon at the Gray Herbarium, he had to admit that he had remembered seeing what he had thought was *Saxifraga rivularis* on the shelf, but that he feared he had made no collection of it. Fortunately, this fear proved to be unfounded and, when informed, Dr. John Beaman examined the collection, which he found was indeed *Saxifraga cernua*.

The collection is deposited in the Beal-Darlington Herbarium of Michigan State University.

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³STEELE, F. L. 1967. The *Saxifraga Aizoön* Station Revisited, *Rhodora* 69: 484-485.